



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NATIONAL SURVEY OF FISHING, HUNTING, AND WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED RECREATION BEGINS IN JANUARY

One of every two adult Americans participates in some type of outdoor recreation involving fish and wildlife, collectively spending more than \$40 billion each year enjoying fish and wildlife resources.

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will gauge how this participation in fishing and hunting and its associated economic activity has grown or changed over the past 5 years as it begins the "National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation" in January. The survey, which was last conducted in 1980, will compile information on Americans' fish and wildlife related outdoor pursuits and expenditures during 1985.

"In this country, fishing and hunting are big pastimes, big business, and big responsibilities for natural resource management agencies," says William P. Horn, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. "If we are to fulfill our role as stewards for the Nation's resources in the most efficient and economical way possible, it's essential that we know who our patrons are, what they need, and what demands will be like into the next decade. This voluntary survey is one of the few tools we have to answer these questions."

The national survey is financed by hunters and anglers through payment of excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunition and fishing equipment. It is the federal government's oldest and most comprehensive continuing attempt to measure the Nation's use of fish and wildlife resources. The voluntary survey

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has been conducted every 5 years since 1955, and measures Americans' participation in traditional sports like hunting and fishing, as well as in the growing area of "nonconsumptive" avocations, such as wildlife photography and observation.

In 1980, the survey found that 42 million adult Americans fish and 17 million adults hunt each year, while 83 million people engage in the "nonconsumptive" pastimes.

The survey is requested by the individual State fish and game agencies which, in addition to federal agencies such as the Fish and Wildlife Service, use the data to forecast demands for wildlife recreation, spot trends in participation and expenditures, and better serve the general public in the management of natural resources.

The 1985 survey will be conducted in two phases by the Bureau of the Census. The first phase begins in January when more than 130,000 households, randomly selected from across the country, will be polled by telephone for voluntary information measuring their participation in fishing and hunting. The second phase will start in April, when over 39,000 individuals will be interviewed in person by Census Bureau researchers, who will gather more detailed information about public use of these natural resources.

The Fish and Wildlife Service expects to publish its full report, "1985 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation" in early 1987. Results of the survey and sales information about the report will be announced at that time.